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### REPORT OF THE CURATOR OF THE WILLIAM S. VAUX COLLECTIONS.

The Curator of the William S. Vaux collections respectfully submits his fourth annual report to the Council of the Academy of Natural Sciences:—

The collections are in good order and condition, no change having been made since the report of 1885, except the introduction of one hundred and fourteen mineral specimens, purchased by the approval of the Curators of the Academy, during the year ending November 30, 1886.

No. of mineral specimens as by report of Nov. 30, 1885,	6,516
Purchased between Nov. 30, 1885, and Nov. 30, 1886, . . .	114
Total, . . . . .	6,630
Archæological specimens (same as noted in report of 1885), no additions, . . . . .	2,940

The growth of the collection since it came into possession of the Academy is as follows:—

Nov. 30, 1884, specimens purchased, . . . . .	60
Nov. 30, 1885, specimens purchased, . . . . .	104
Nov. 30, 1886, specimens purchased, . . . . .	114
In all, . . . . .	278

These 278 specimens have been purchased at an aggregate cost of \$1448.70.

It will be conceded that the new material added to the mineralogical collection since 1883 has very materially improved its character, not only in beauty, but for scientific study.

Among the specimens most worthy of special note which have been added are a number of fine transparent crystals of Topaz from Siberia. One of these is a crystal  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches square,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches in height, on a matrix of Feldspar, coated with Albite; it is a well terminated rhombic prism, showing the basal cleavage planes with great beauty. Also worthy of mention are a fine specimen of Zircon from Canada, weighing  $12\frac{1}{2}$  pounds, made up of a group of square prismatic crystals, measuring  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 4$  inches and  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height; a specimen of Stibnite from Japan, a cluster of long, well terminated crystals, with interesting

modifications  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches, 18 inches long; specimens of Vanadinite, Wulfenite, and Descloizite, from Arizona; emerald and Hiddenite from North Carolina. The Tourmalines, Rutiles and Molybdenites, already well illustrated, have received rich addition.

A number of new species, not before represented in the collection, have been obtained together with many varieties from new localities.

All the income of the fund has been expended on the collection, except a balance in hand of \$513.54, applicable to the purchase of new specimens and of books. As the cases are now paid for and no other expense anticipated, the entire income can be used for the purchase of additional specimens and books, which will—unless some unforeseen accident occurs—always keep the collection up to a high standard of importance. From a scientific point of view it is one of the best public collections in our country.

Respectfully submitted,

JACOB BINDER,

Curator.

#### REPORT OF THE RECORDER OF THE BIOLOGICAL AND MICROSCOPICAL SECTION.

During the year the Section held fourteen meetings, with an average attendance of twelve persons.

At these meetings a great variety of objects was shown. Especial notice should be made of the observations on embryology at various meetings by Messrs. Sharp, Wingate and Ryder; upon the fungi, by Dr. Rex, and upon the different methods of mounting, by Drs. Hall and Brinton.

The following are some of the more important events occurring during the year:—

December 21, 1885. Lecture by Dr. Thomas Taylor, of the Agricultural Department, Washington, upon "The Work and Results in the Investigation of Butter and other Fats."

February 1, 1886. Communication by Mr. H. Wingate, upon "The So-Called Visual Organs of the *Amphioxus*."

February 15, 1886. Communication by Dr. M. B. Hartzell, upon "Glycerine as a Mounting Fluid."